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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Computer Services

1. On Wednesday, 8 June 1966, I met with Mr. Bannerman to discuss the general subject of problems in the computer support to the Support Directorate rendered by the Office of Computer Services in relation to the Support System Study, on-going programs, and the possible conversion of 501 programs to 360 hardware.

2. With regard to the question of converting present programs from the 501 to the 360, I reported to Mr. Bannerman that this had come up in a discussion I had with Chuck Briggs [   ] on Monday. They are considering the feasibility of taking this approach but have not yet reached any conclusions. Among the problems is the fact that there is not a one-for-one relationship between programs and files on the 501. Each file of data in the 501 system is manipulated by several programs in order to produce different reports. Some of the programs used to manipulate data in File A may also be used together with other programs to manipulate data in File B such that there is an extensive overlapping and inter-relationship among several files and many programs. OCS is not in the position to say at this time whether or not it is feasible to identify a package of files and programs with definable parameters which would permit them to be lifted from the 501 and reprogrammed for other equipment. Even if they were able to define such a package, however, there is some doubt in my mind about whether they would be any better equipped to respond to re-quests levied against those files on the 360 than they are at present on the 501 because they do not yet have any great depth or breadth in personnel competent to program the 360. This is at least in part because IBM has over-extended itself and cannot accommodate all of the people who require training in pro-gramming for the System 360.

3. While the 501 is very nearly saturated, the essential problem is not with the time available on the equipment but is with the availability of people competent to program it. On the other hand, if we were able to produce enough programmers to satisfy the requests being levied against them, it is quite like-ly that the additional burden they would generate for the hardware would soon exceed the time available. Still another factor relating to this problem is the

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time it would take to reprogram the 501 applications for the 360 in relation to the time when the Support System Study will begin to produce applications which can be run on the 360 and thereby grant some relief to the 501. The personnel part of the problem is further complicated by the general shortage of 501 programmers in the employment market. The 501 is considered obsolescent and people interested in learning programming and becoming computer programmers are studying newer equipment. No one is interested in learning how to program equipment that is on the way out.

4. These are perhaps the most serious problems confronting the new management in the Office of Computer Services and they have not been in position long enough to be able to produce any conclusions or solutions. Apart from rendering support to the Office of Computer Services in whatever actions they recommend, about the only position action available to the Deputy Director for Support is to take a hard-nosed attitude toward the review of requests for computer services addressed to OCS which will result in new programming in an effort to reduce the demands for programming support and programming manhours.

5. Mr. Bannerman agreed that we should take a more hard-nosed approach, recognizing that this will tend to detract from the overall effort in the Support System Study because requests for computer support must be staffed out before intelligent judgments can be made and this staffing inevitably takes the time of members of the Support System Staff.

6. In discussing the problem of personnel shortage in the Office of Computer Services, Mr. Bannerman referred to the personnel status report which shows that OCS has a ceiling of ☐ positions with ☐ people on board. He telephoned Mr. ☐ and asked him to review the recruitment situation to determine what we might have in process which would grant some relief. Mr. ☐ agreed to look into it and report to Mr. Bannerman.

7. I had also reported to Mr. Bannerman that the Office of Computer Services had requested additional positions in their Fiscal Year 1967 budget but these had been denied. Mr. Bannerman telephoned John Clarke who agreed that he would join the DD/S in giving whatever support seems appropriate to the Office of Computer Services in obtaining men and money to solve their problems. Mr. Clarke assured Mr. Bannerman that money could be made available from year end funds to purchase another 501 if that was the action OCS decided was most appropriate.

8. At Mr. Bannerman's suggestion, I invited Chuck Briggs to come to the Office of the DD/S to discuss some of these questions. Mr. Bannerman explained

that he had invited Mr. Briggs here to give assurance of complete support from the Deputy Director for Support in any reasonable actions proposed to ease the 501 situation. Alluding to some of the points I had discussed with him earlier, Mr. Bannerman told Mr. Briggs about his conversations with [   ] and   **25X1** John Clarke and reiterated the assurance that they are interested in doing whatever they can in whatever capacity is appropriate to assist the Office of Computer Services in meeting its obligations to provide computer support after Mr. Briggs has had an opportunity to become fully acquainted with the situation in his new position. Mr. Briggs reported that they had asked for an increase in ceiling of about 100 positions and had gotten none; that they had about 60 people in the pipeline of which they expect to lose about 60 per cent; and that [   ] is   **25X1** completing a classification survey which probably will not provide all of the relief needed. Mr. Bannerman said that [   ] has ground rules which he is   **25X1** obligated to observe but if the survey did not deal adequately with all of the problems he would be willing to review them with the Director of Computer Services and the Director of Personnel.

9. Mr. Briggs expressed his appreciation for Mr. Bannerman's interest and support and indicated he would be in touch again as soon as he has studied the situation thoroughly enough to reach any conclusions.

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Special Assistant to the
Deputy Director for Support

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